

Virginia City Grand Prix

PUBLIC SCOPING



DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2012-0032-EA

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District
Sierra Front Field Office
5665 Morgan Mill Road
Carson City, NV 89701
775-885-6000

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BLM Seeks Input on a Motorcycle Event in Virginia City

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Sierra Front Field Office in Carson City, Nevada is requesting your input in the development of an environmental assessment (EA) for a motorcycle event to be held in Virginia City, Storey County, Nevada (Attachment A). The Virginia City Motorcycle Club (Club) has submitted to the BLM a Special Recreation Permit application (SF-299) for the “Virginia City Grand Prix” events on April 27 and 28, 2013. This EA would be used by the BLM to authorize events between 2013 and 2017.

For more than 30 years similar events have been held in Virginia City. In order to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, a new EA to evaluate the potential effects of holding the event in the future will be prepared.

In preparing their proposal, the Club has provided the BLM with the following information:

- The annual event would occur each spring, typically on the last weekend of April;
- There would be 400-550 participants each day, with up to 5,000 spectators over the two-day event;
- The race course matrix would include approximately 65 miles of existing roads and trails in the Virginia City area, although only about 20 to 30 miles of the entire course would be used each year;
- The race course matrix is composed of: 67 percent dirt roads; 22 percent two-track trails; eight percent paved roads, and three percent single-track trails;
- Event staging and parking would occur on private land; and
- The race course matrix crosses a mix of public and private lands.

To assist the BLM in evaluating the Club’s proposal and whether there are existing concerns or conflict of uses within the Virginia City area, your input is requested at this early stage.

- Do you have knowledge of sensitive or unique resources within the proposed event area?
- Do you have knowledge of conflicts between recreation users within the proposed event area or timing of event?
- Do you have other information about the proposed event area that could assist us with our evaluation?

For additional information and maps of the proposed motorcycle event/project area go to: http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/carson_city_field/blm_information/nepa.html.

How to Comment

No public meeting has been scheduled at this time. This 30-day scoping period **closes on July 26, 2012**.

Should you have any questions, or to submit your comments, contact: Brian Buttazoni, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, 5665 Morgan Mill Rd, Carson City, Nevada 89701 or email at:

bbuttazoni@blm.gov. For more information call: 775-885-6004. Comments can also be faxed to: 775-885-6147 attn: Brian Buttazoni

Resources Considered for Analysis

The following resources were considered during an internal interdisciplinary team meeting on this proposal held on August 15, 2011. Based on that review, resources *present* and *may be affected* by this proposal would be fully analyzed in the EA.

Category I, Supplemental Authorities.

Resource	Present Yes/No	Affected Yes/No	Rationale
Air Quality	N		The project area is not within a non-attainment area. During the event, there would be a minor increase in vehicle emissions and particulates, however overall air quality would be affected.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	N		Resource not present.
Cultural Resources	Y	??	To be determined in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer.
Environmental Justice	N		Resource not present.
Farm Lands (prime or unique)	N		Resource not present.
Floodplains	N		Resource not present.
Invasive, Nonnative Species	Y	N	Although invasive, non-native species may occur within the project area, the proposed event would be limited to existing roads and trails and would not change the overall occurrence or distribution of invasive, non-native species. Stipulations in the special recreation permit would further reduce the likelihood of inadvertent spread of invasive, non-native plant species.
Migratory Birds	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Native American Religious Concerns	Y	N	The proposed event would not affect access to traditional resources and animal and plant resources.
Threatened or Endangered Species (animals)	N		Resource not present.
Threatened or Endangered Species (plants)	N		Resource not present.
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	Y	??	The BLM will coordinate with the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection to determine if the race network crosses through any potentially hazardous mine tailings/waste sites.
Water Quality (Surface/Ground)	Y	N	Seasonal streams in the project area would not be affected by the proposed event which would not include any construction activities across any surface streams.
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	Y	N	Although limited riparian areas associated with seasonal streams exist in the project area, the proposed event would not include any construction activity adjacent to such areas; as a result they would not be affected.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	N		Resource not present.
Wilderness/WSA	N		Resource not present.

Category II, Other Resources.

Resource or Issue	Present Yes/No	Affected Yes/No	Rationale
BLM Sensitive Species (animals)	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
BLM Sensitive Species (plants)	Y	N	Areas with known occurrences of sensitive plants would be avoided; therefore this resource would not be affected.
Fire Management/Vegetation	N		Resource not present.
Forest Resources	N		Resource not present.
General Wildlife	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Land Use Authorization	N		Resource not present.
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	N		Resource not present.
Livestock Grazing	N		Resource not present.
Minerals	Y	N	The proposed event would occur on existing roads and trails and would not affect any mineral activity on public lands.
Paleontological	N		Resource not present.
Recreation	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Socioeconomics	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Soils	Y	N	The proposed event activities would remain on existing roads and trails, and would not affect overall soil conditions or cause conditions that could lead to soil erosion.
Travel Management	Y	Y	Carried forward for analysis.
Vegetation	Y	N	The proposed event would remain on existing paved and dirt roads and trails. No new construction would occur. Vegetation would not be affected.
Visual Resources	Y	N	The proposed event would not change the overall visual character of the project area and would be consistent with VRM Class III.
Wild Horses and Burros	N		Resource not present.

The most recent EA for these events was completed in 2003. The BLM has determined that this analysis is inadequate for proposed future events. As a result, in March of 2012 the BLM and Club executed a Memorandum of Understanding that: described the responsibilities of the BLM and Club; and implemented cost recovery.

A copy of the 2003 environmental assessment can be found at:

http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/carson_city_field/blm_information/nepa/nepa_archives.html

The draft EA for this proposal would be made available for a 30-day public review and comment period in the fall/winter 2012-2013.

Preliminary Identification of Resource Issues

Biological Resources

- There are no plant or animal species listed under the Endangered Species Act within the project area, nor is there critical habitat.
- The project area is not within greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) habitat, a candidate species for listing on the Endangered Species Act.
- Two Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) nests and one prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) nest are located within the project area. Their status (historic, active, not active) is unknown.
- Two golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) nests and one Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) nest are located outside of the project area, and are at least three miles from the event area. Their status (historic, active, not active) is unknown.

Cultural Resources

- The project area involve public and private lands within the boundaries of the Virginia City National Historic Landmark and Virginia City National Register District.